

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 BUENOS 00443 222127Z

11

ACTION ARA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4231

INFO DIA DOD WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUENOS AIRES 0443

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, AR

SUBJECT: MRS. PERON'S CANDIDACY: FADING PROSPECTS FOR IMPEACHMENT

REF: A) BUENOS AIRES 0402 AND B) BUENOS AIRES 0221

1. FOLLOWING THE MEETING OF PERONIST NATIONAL COUNCIL ON JAN 20, JOSE BAEZ STATED THAT COUNCIL HAD, FOR THE TIME BEING, DISAUTHORIZED ANY CAMPAIGN ADVOCATING MRS. PERON'S CANDIDACY FOR THE PRESIDENCY (SEE REF A). FEW OBSERVERS, HOWEVER, TOOK THIS TO MEAN THAT MRS. PERON DOES NOT INTEND TO RUN. ON THE CONTRARY, ALL EVIDENCE SUGGESTS THAT SHE DOES. INDEED, HER CABINET CHANGES OF LAST WEEK ARE SEEN BY MOST AS THE OPENING GUN OF HER CAMPAIGN. THAT MRS. PERON MAY PLAN TO RUN FOR ANOTHER TERM AT A TIME WHEN FEW OBSERVERS BELIEVE SHE CAN COMPLETE THIS ONE MAY APPEAR LUDICROUS--BUT MRS. PERON HAS NEVER BEEN KNOWN FOR LACK OF BRASS AND AUDACITY.

2. SHOULD MRS. PERON IN FACT ANNOUNCE CANDIDACY, OR SHOULD IT BE CONFIRMED THAT SHE SOON PLANS TO DO SO, THAT WOULD DOUBTLESS WEIGH HEAVILY AS FACTOR IN CALCULATIONS OF ARMED FORCES. PUTTING UP WITH MRS. PERON'S GOVT FOR ANOTHER SIXTEEN MONTHS WOULD BE DIFFICULT ENOUGH (IF NOT ALREADY IMPOSSIBLE) FOR THEM TO ACCEPT. ONE CAN IMAGINE HOW MUCH MORE DIFFICULT TO ACCEPT WOULD BE THE PROSPECT OF FIVE MORE YEARS OF MRS. PERON'S STYLE (OR LACK THEREOF) OF GOVT. THUS, RATHER THAN THE CABINET CHANGES THEMSELVES, IT WAS PERHAPS MORE THE CONCLUSION THAT THEY PRESAGED THE OVERT LAUNCHING OF HER CANDIDACY WHICH SPARKED LAST  
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PAGE 02 BUENOS 00443 222127Z

WEEK'S RESURGENCE OF COUP RUMORS--A RESURGENCE WHICH HAS NOT

ABATED.

3. QUESTION OF MRS. PERON'S CANDIDACY HAS THROWN UCR INTO QUANDRY. ON THE ONE HAND, THEY ARE FULLY AWARE THAT CONFIRMATION THAT SHE WILL RUN MAY BE THE LAST STRAW WHICH WILL DRAW THE MILITARY IN WITH ALL FOUR FEET, THUS PERHAPS ABORTING THE ELECTORAL PROCESS ALTOGETHER. AT SAME TIME, BALBIN AND SUPPORTERS BELIEVE (PERHAPS MISTAKENLY) THAT THEY COULD BEAT MRS. PERON IN FREE AND OPEN ELECTIONS. THUS, WHILE ON THE ONE HAND THEY CONTINUE TO BELIEVE THAT MRS. PERON MUST BE REMOVED FROM OFFICE AND POWER LEFT IN THE HANDS OF SOMEONE LIKE LUDER IF CONSTITUTIONALISM IS TO BE SAVED, ON THE OTHER THEY WONDER IF IT IS REALLY IN THE INTEREST OF THE UCR TO HELP REMOVE HER, SINCE IN AN ELECTION THEIR CHANCES AGAINST LUDER WOULD BE CONSIDERABLY LESS (THEY BELIEVE) THAN AGAINST MRS. PERON. AS UCR'S DR. VANOLI COMMENTED TO EMBOFF YESTERDAY: "WE SEEM TO HAVE BEEN PLACED IN A DAMNED IF WE DO, DAMNED IF WE DON'T SITUATION. PERHAPS BEST THING FOR US WOULD BE SIMPLY TO SIT BACK AND LET CARDS FALL WHERE THEY MAY."

4. IN PART, IT MAY BE SUCH CALCULATIONS WHICH ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR UCR INERTIA VIS-A-VIS IMPEACHMENT MOTION. RICARDO BALESTRA, ONE OF THE AUTHORS OF THE MOTION, INDICATED TO EMBOFF RECENTLY THAT MOTION WAS GETTING NO SUPPORT AT ALL FROM UCR, LET ALONE FROM ANTI-VERTICALISTA PERONISTS. "WE CANNOT EVEN GET THE COMMITTEE TO CONVENE," HE COMPLAINED.

5. THERE ARE, HOWEVER, ALSO VERY PRAGMATIC CONSIDERATIONS BEHIND UCR FAILURE TO PUSH IMPEACHMENT MOTION. DR. VANOLI TOLD EMBOFF THAT BALBIN HAS COUNTED VOTES CAREFULLY AND CONCLUDED THAT IT IMPOSSIBLE TO GET TWO-THIRDS NECESSARY TO IMPEACH. HE THEREFORE BELIEVE IT WOULD BE COUNTERPRODUCTIVE TO CARRY PROCEEDINGS FORWARD. "WORST THING POSSIBLE WOULD BE TO TAKE IT TO A VOTE AND LOSENZ VANOLI COMMENTED. "MRS. PERON WOULD THUS STAND OFFICIALLY ABSOLVED AND VINDICATED."

6. WITH IMPEACHMENT THUS STALLED AND MRS. PERON HAVING REJECTED MILITARY DEMANDS THAT SHE RESIGN (SEE REF B), CONSTITUTIONALISTS ARE UNCERTAIN WHAT TO DO NEXT. BOTH MILITARY AND CIVILIANS HAD HOPED TO GET RID OF MRS. PERON WITHOUT VIOLATING CONSTITUTION. IT HAS BECOME INCREASINGLY APPARENT THAT THIS WILL PROBABLY NOT BE CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 BUENOS 00443 222127Z

POSSIBLE. IF MILITARY WANT HER OUT, THEY WILL ALMOST CERTAINLY HAVE TO USE FORCE.

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## Message Attributes

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